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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 000477

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SUBJECT: BEIJING-BASED G-5 CHIEFS OF MISSION ON SINO-FRENCH  
RELATIONS, HIGH-LEVEL VISITS, OTHER TOPICS

Classified By: Acting DCM William Weinstein. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

#### Summary

11. (C) At the regular meeting of G-5 Ambassadors in Beijing February 20, French Ambassador Herve Ladsous reported that a sequence of events is being taken to repair Sino-French relations and that several visits are planned in the near future to that end but no apologies would be forthcoming. The Chinese Government declined to exchange liaison officers with the French Navy in multi-national operations against piracy off the Somali coast because of the presence of Communist Party representatives in a PLA Navy delegation. German Ambassador Michael Schaeffer reported that a Chinese trade mission to Europe has ballooned in size to over 240 government officials and business representatives expected to attend despite the fact that little preparation work has been completed for the trip. UK Ambassador William Ehrman reported that the British Minister of Trade and Investment is slated to visit China to discuss World Bank Reform and the global financial crisis. Japanese Ambassador Yuji Miyamoto said that several upcoming high-level visits, such as by the Ministers of Defense and of Foreign Affairs, will likely be "standard" and contain "nothing of substance." End Summary.

#### Participants

12. (C) Japanese Ambassador Yuji Miyamoto hosted French Ambassador Herve Ladsous, German Ambassador Dr. Michael Schaefer, UK Ambassador William Ehrman and Acting DCM William Weinstein February 20 for the regular G-5 gathering of Beijing-based Chiefs of Mission.

#### Sino-French Relations: Moving Toward Detente

13. (C) French Prime Minister Francois Fillon might visit Beijing in honor of the 45th anniversary of Sino-French diplomatic relations as an attempt to shore up relations between the two nations, French Ambassador Ladsous reported. Though the French Embassy had held discussions about the state of Sino-French relations with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, "neither side is giving much." China discussed a sequence of events to improve relations, and Ambassador Ladsous said he was trying to arrange a phone call between French President Nicolas Sarkozy and Premier Wen, so long as the exact language of the phone call was agreed upon in advance. Ambassador Ladsous that no apology would be forthcoming on either side. The Chinese have said that repairing relations had to be done "step by step," but noted paradoxically that few steps could be taken until the current rift in relations was repaired. Other upcoming French

visitors include former Prime Minister Jacques Chirac in April, and President of the French National Assembly Bernard Accoyer, the third in command of the French Government, during the second half of April. Accoyer's visit would be the first of a person of his rank in 25 years.

#### Sino-French Cooperation against Somali Pirates

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¶4. (C) Despite the rift in relations, the French Navy has had contact with the Chinese vessel engaged in countering piracy off the Somali coast, Ladsous said. The Chinese had asked for French assistance in getting documents related to port entry from the French missions in both Djibouti and Yemen, but had refused the offer of an exchange of Liaison Officers.

#### Japan on East China Sea Agreement

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¶5. (C) The Japanese Government was concerned that opposition within the Chinese Communist Party would lead to an abandonment of the agreements on oil and gas exploration in the East China Sea, Japanese Ambassador Miyamoto reported. The Japanese Government was holding secret meetings with the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) to attempt to revive the agreement. The meetings were being kept secret to prevent Chinese Communist Party opposition from discovering them, Miyamoto said.

#### Chinese Trade Mission to Europe

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¶6. (C) A proposed Chinese trade mission headed by Chinese Commerce Minister Chen Deming to Europe, including Germany, the UK and Switzerland, was ballooning in scope, with over 240 participants representing 180 companies planning to attend, German Ambassador Schaeffer reported. He noted that despite "much energy" from both sides to reach agreement to hold the visit, there had been little actual preparation of visit activities. During the trade mission, Chinese corporations planned to spend between 2.2 and 14 billion USD on machinery, environmental technology and other items.

#### Sino-German Cooperation on Peacekeeping

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¶7. (C) The German Government had been holding bilateral negotiations with China on UN peacekeeping cooperation, and the Chinese had been "particularly forthcoming," German Ambassador Schaeffer said. The Germans had put particular emphasis on peacekeeping missions in Ghana.

#### British Finance Minister Visit

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¶8. (C) British Minister of Trade and Investment Mervyn Davies visited Beijing February 13 to discuss international economic issues in advance of the April 2 G-20 summit in London, according to Ambassador Ehrman. His interlocutors included Vice Premier Wang Qishan and Vice Foreign Minister He Yafei. Davies noted that China was "in tune" with other countries regarding solutions to the global financial crisis, but that questions remained regarding the reform of international organizations such as the World Bank. Specific British proposals for reform included having China replenish World Bank funds to allow for capital outlays that could "pre-empt the downward spiral" in developing country economies, and developing an oversight function to monitor fiscal stimuli and macro economic policies. Allowing China to replenish World Bank funds, however, might bolster Chinese claims for an increase in World Bank voting strength quotas. The British were urging the Chinese to consider investing their reserves in other International Financial Institutions (IFIs)

in addition to Treasury Securities. Other topics of discussion included carbon dioxide reduction and goals for UN Copenhagen Climate Change Conference December 7-18. The British noted that Chinese President Hu Jintao would attend the G-20 Summit, but that no substantive response had been made to any of these proposals. The Chinese were in "listening mode," and while their ideas were in the mainstream, China did not want to take the lead with other G-20 nations, British Ambassador Ehrman said.

#### Lord Malloch Brown Visit

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19. British Minister of State for Africa, Asia and the UN Lord Mark Malloch Brown visited China February 20-23 to discuss international financial reform, UN reform, and Africa, Ambassador Ehrman said. PRC interlocutors included Vice Foreign Minister Wang Guangya and Assistant Foreign Minister Zhai Jun.

#### Other High-Level Visitors

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10. (C) Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso was scheduled to visit China during the week of February 23-27, and Chinese Deputy Chief of the General Staff Lieutenant General Ma Xiaotian was slated to visit Tokyo in the near future, Japanese Ambassador Miyamoto said. The Japanese expected "standard meetings" and "nothing of substance" to be discussed. Japanese Defense Minister Yasukuza Hamada was slated to visit in March, but would likely have his visit moved because of the National People's Congress. Politburo Standing Committee Member Li Changchun would reciprocate with a visit to Japan following Hamada's visit, but the Japanese anticipated no substantial discussions. Japanese Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone would visit China the last week of March for discussions with Vice Premier Wang Qishan in advance of the G-20 summit, while Wang was slated to visit Tokyo in April or May.  
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